

# the otherpress

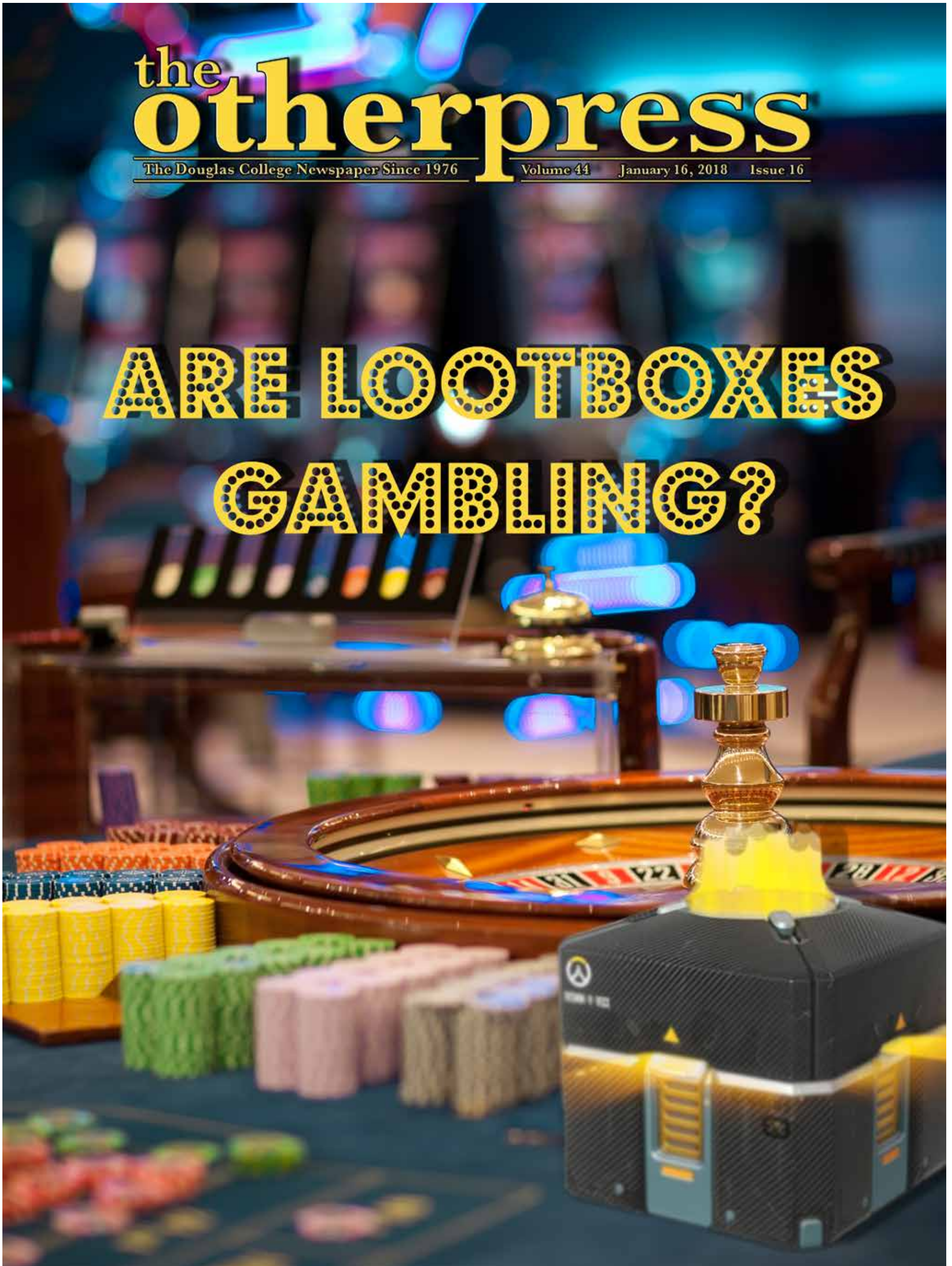
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## ARE LOOTBOXES GAMBLING?





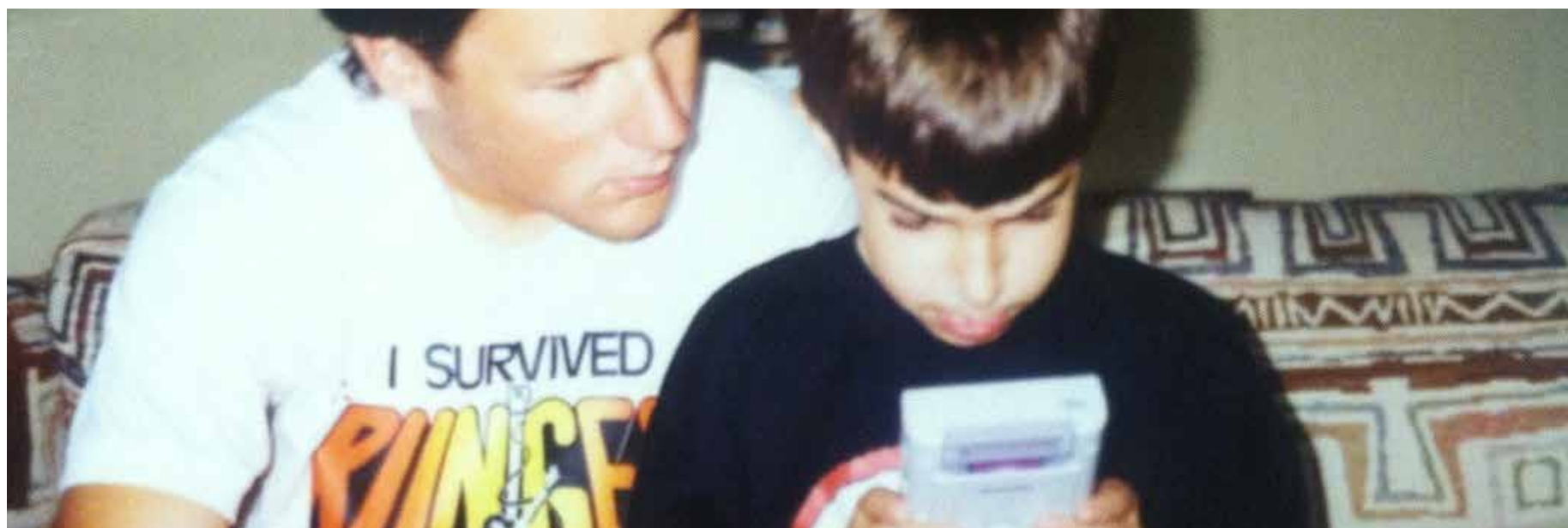


Photo via Reddit user dont\_make\_cents

## The crushing cost of gaming

Yeah, I'm doing a Lettitor on video games.

It's about time, if you ask me, given that a modest slice of the pie that is my free time (and it's not as big of a pie as I would like) is put towards playing video games, and a paper with a feature on loot boxes seemed like the perfect place to finally write it.

My grand adventure into the world of video games began at, what I'm going to guess was, the ripe age of six-ish, when my uncle gifted me and my older brother a *Gameboy Colour*, along with *Pokémon Blue* for me, and *Pokémon Red* for him.

The idea was that we would share the handheld console while playing our own designated games; and what would become a steady theme in the years to come found me reading the instruction manual while my big brother got the first turn.

Then came the Nintendo 64, with its fantastic four-controller jacks, and

games like *Super Smash Bros* and *Mario Kart* that not only allowed for, but actively encouraged multiplayer.

I packed my old GameCube away with me when I moved out of my parents' house and took off to college, and occasionally visited old favourites like *Luigi's Mansion* and *Pikmin* when I was really procrastinating my school work, but it wasn't until I'd graduated and found myself working consistent hours (along with receiving those sweet, sweet salary paycheques) that I finally decided to invest in a modern system.

And hot damn is it ever expensive nowadays.

With brand new titles coming in at nearly \$100 after tax, it's a miracle that people are still putting out the cash for the newest games and not just retreating to their childhood favourites instead.

I get it, though. Games are bigger, bolder, and better than ever nowadays, and the cost has to reflect that—along with

inflation and all that fun stuff.

But when you're already shelling out nearly \$100 for a game, I think we can all agree that you should get the game in its entirety, right?

Well, apparently not anymore, as I've so tragically discovered in the past few months.

My main reason for buying a PlayStation 4 was so I could play *Overwatch*—it looked like an awesome, fun, well-developed game, and it totally is. I happily bought it alongside my new PlayStation, and headed home a little lighter in the pockets, but happy.

But then I had to pay another \$70 or so just to access online, which is, by the way, the only way the game can be played. A bummer, but whatever.

I received *Call of Duty: WWII* for Christmas, and was having a grand old time on multiplayer until I was asked if I'd like to spend the \$70 to purchase the additional map pack included in the

Season Pass.

Which, when coupled with the annual payment to even play online, means that to shoot strangers online in *Call of Duty: WWII*'s Carentan map, you need to spend a total of \$220 (Game: \$80, PS Plus: \$70, Season Pass map pack: \$70).

That's kind of... ridiculous, right?

Couple that with the presence of loot boxes for most big-name games (see our feature in the centre spread) and a nice, relaxing hobby can turn into a money-suck before you know it.

Maybe I should just go back to playing *Pikmin*... until they release a new one for the Nintendo Switch, which I'll obviously have to buy.

Ugh.

Cheers,

*Chandler Walter*

# the otherpress

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- ✓ Report: Mental health issues rising on Canadian campuses
  - ✓ City considers new housing policies
  - ✓ DSU to hold annual general meeting
- And more!



..... w a t e r f r o n t .....

The future of New Westminister’s iconic riverfront will be the subject of the next Urban Challenges forum at Douglas College, which will be held Wednesday in room in room 2201 at the NW campus from 6:30-8pm.



Photos by Analyn Cuarto



# Report: Mental health issues rising on Canadian campuses

> Students often fear disclosing their mental health issues

Jillian McMullen  
Staff Writer

In recent years, practitioners in Canada have noted a spike in mental health-related issues among students, with half of those students experiencing the onset of their illness during their time in school, according to a new report.

The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) published a paper on January 9, which examines the realities of mental health on post-secondary campuses across the country and makes suggestions as to what the federal government can do to improve them. Although provincial governments are responsible for both education and mental health care, the report demonstrates how the federal government is implicated in both sectors, spending over 12 billion and 50 billion on either, respectively. In the report, CASA admits

difficulties in accurately accounting for those suffering from mental health issues, with inquiries into the mental health environment among students often only looking at registration rates with student accessibility programs. Most students, however, suffer from mild to moderate conditions and do not attempt to apply for an institution's offered services, often believing their conditions are not severe enough to seek support. This, the report says, is why institutions should focus on expanding their supports for students.

Academic accommodations are perhaps the most common tool post-secondary institutions use to provide extra support to their students struggling with mental illness. The report lists ways these accommodations are commonly employed, such as in homework extensions and adjusted test times. It articulates how integral these supports are for students experiencing mental health issues.

"Research shows that success in post-secondary education for many students is linked to the presence of accessible and sufficient accommodations," the report explains. "Studies of students with 'invisible disabilities' have revealed that students felt accommodations were imperative to their success."

Students encounter difficulties while attempting to access those accommodations as many institutions require formal documentation of permanent disability, which can be hard for students to get—particularly if the illness has just begun to manifest. According to the report, students often fear fully disclosing their mental health issues to faculty members due to the stigma surrounding it.

"Final say for academic accommodations, such as extensions for individual assignments, are often left to the discretion of professors," the report says. "This presents another

barrier for students who may be dealing with professors who lack information about the appropriate services for students with mental health problems and illnesses, hold prejudicial attitudes, or are unwilling to put in extra work to accommodate students."

The report suggests greater federal investment in data collection will help to end that kind of stigma. With the creation of a national body charged with establishing concrete data, the government can more accurately develop action plans that benefit students.

"Better national data is needed to help ensure that evidence-based solutions are developed to fight stigma, reduce discrimination, and improve mental health supports on Canadian campuses," the report suggests.

The full report is available on the CASA website.

# City considers new housing policies

> Affordable renting on council agenda

Colten Kamlade  
Staff Reporter

New Westminster may begin exploring options for increasing affordable housing in the city, after several council members expressed their support on January 8 for a recommendation outlining rental replacement and inclusionary housing policies.

New Westminster City Councillor Jaimie McEvoy expressed why he thought the issue was worth consideration.

"It's important we protect rental housing in the city, and as I said on the previous issue, it's important we do it in a proactive way, and that action come out of policy," he said at the city council meeting. "When it comes to any kind

of development that might involve rental properties, the city wants those rental properties replaced, and in the course of that replacement we want to have at least some discussion about the possibility of a somewhat-affordable housing component in that work as well."

Mayor Johnathan Cote also voiced support for the recommendation, and referenced New Westminster's past involvement tackling housing concerns.

"New Westminster really has been a leader with a number of policies and has led the region. Whether it's our work with rental policy or our work with housing first and the creation of new transitional housing to address the homelessness issue," he said during the meeting. "This is definitely an issue that is

going to require all levels of government to be involved in, but there are specific tools that can be used at the local government level to address this matter, and I think a rental replacement policy and examining inclusionary housing policies are two very important policy tools that we have at our jurisdiction."

Cote later expressed concern that if they did not explore housing options, the city might suffer for it.

"The rental replacement policy, I think, there's got to be a recognition that we've done a very good job of setting up policies in our community that has not led to the demolition of older rental buildings in our community," he said. "But at some point, some of those buildings are going to reach the end of

their life expectancy and there will need to be a transition, and I think without this policy work, we're not necessarily in the best position to ensure that the new housing is rental housing and that we have affordable components of that."

Cote, despite his enthusiasm, acknowledged the need for more research before any action was taken.

"I'm really looking forward to the work being done. I think we need to do a lot of economic analysis and policy work before implementing it, but I really see these as being the two really big policy ideas that the City of New Westminster can be leaders in when it comes to addressing one of the biggest crises that Metro Vancouver is facing regarding housing affordability," he said.



Photo by Analyn Cuarto



# Zero nominations submitted for vacant education council seat

› Coquitlam campus short one student representative since November

Jake Wray  
News Editor

A byelection to select a new student representative from the Coquitlam campus to sit on the Douglas College education council has stalled because no candidates have been nominated.

The education council is an elected body consisting of two students from the Coquitlam campus, two students from the New Westminster campus, two support staff, and ten faculty members. The responsibilities of the education council include defining curriculum content, setting various academic policies, and advising the Douglas College board.

One of the Coquitlam student representative positions has been vacant since November, when Meredith Graham stepped down from the position, according

to Douglas College registrar Rella Ng.

After Graham stepped down, the registrar's office put out a call for nominations, Ng said in a phone interview with the Other Press, but no nominations were submitted. Ng said the lack of nominations might be due to bad timing.

"It was probably timing of the year, because it was in late November," she said, adding that the Coquitlam campus might have a smaller pool of students interested in student politics. "We maybe just didn't have many students from the Coquitlam campus that wanted to be on education council."

A student must be taking at least 50 per cent of their credits at the Coquitlam campus in order to be a Coquitlam student representative on the education council, according to the Douglas College website.

Ng said there will be another call for nominations for the vacant seat in

approximately two weeks, but she is not sure if there will be any change.

"Given that it's so late, we don't know if we're actually going to get any nominations," she said. "Because it's a new term, we might have some new students who may actually be interested in putting their name forward."

The seat might have to remain vacant if no nominations come in during the second call, Ng said.

"If we actually can't get any more nominations, if we've attempted twice, I think we may need to leave that vacant," she said.

The DSU has raised concerns about the vacant seat as well, according to Ng, and both parties are strategizing about the issue.

"It is a conversation I've had with the Douglas Students' Union, they've raised the question about the election process as

well, and so we are actually taking a look at what can we do together collectively to encourage more students [to be] more involved," she said. "Is there something in our procedures that we need to change? So, we are looking at what we can do try to encourage more students to come forward."

McKenzie Hutchison, a New Westminster student representative elected to the education council in October, said she's had a positive experience serving on the council so far.

"You have students providing an alternative voice around a table of administrators. The council is very welcoming and encourages as much student participation as possible," she wrote in a Facebook interview with the Other Press. "It's great to see the strength [of] a student voice, and all the various perspectives it holds, being taken seriously at an important level."

# New Westminster council proclaims January Alzheimer's Awareness Month

› Mayor Cote shares his family's struggle with Alzheimer's

Colten Kamlade  
Staff Reporter

This month is now Alzheimer's Awareness Month in New Westminster after Mayor Jonathan Cote proclaimed it so at a New Westminster city council meeting January 8.

Cote opened up about his own family and their experience with the disorder, and commented on New Westminster's role in helping those affected by Alzheimer's.

"I think it's hard to find anyone whose family isn't some way touched with dementia or Alzheimer's. I know our family is struggling with a family

member who has got Alzheimer's, and I think we're all quite proud that the City of New Westminster is leading the way in terms of becoming a dementia-friendly community," he said. "[We] are continuing to do our policy work to say what [that actually means] from a community standpoint, but as cities continue to age and the demographics begin to age, I think it's going to become more critically important for communities to make sure they're being inclusive and accessible."

Cote read off the proclamation, which sketched a picture of what Alzheimer's is, and how the city should respond to the needs of those suffering from such disorders.

"All British Columbians need to be better informed about Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia and work to create more supportive and inclusive communities ... the City of New Westminster is committed to achieving meaningful outcomes for people with dementia and their caregivers that are person-centred and effective," he said. "And ... the Alzheimer Society of BC is committed to building a dementia friendly BC, where people living with the disease, the caregivers, and their families are welcome, included, and supported. Now therefore I, Jonathan Cote, mayor of the City of New Westminster, do hereby proclaim the month of January

2018 as Alzheimer's Awareness Month in the City of New Westminster."

According to the Alzheimer Society of BC website, the New Westminster city council has also received training from them, and is the first local government in BC to do so.

"In January, 2015 the City of New Westminster became the first council to become dementia-friendly by receiving dementia friends education from the Alzheimer Society of BC," says the website. "Since then the society has been working closely with the City of New Westminster to support the development of a dementia-friendly action plan."

# DSU to hold annual general meeting

› Students have chance to participate in governance of students' union

Jake Wray  
News Editor

The DSU is set to hold its 2018 annual general meeting, which is open to all students, on January 25.

Virtually all students are members of the DSU and the annual general meeting provides students with an opportunity to review the DSU's finances, pose questions to DSU board members, vote on proposed changes to DSU bylaws and policies, and, of course, devour free pizza. A total of 75 members must be present in order for the meeting to proceed.

Aran Armutlu, director of finance for the DSU, said there are a number of exciting proposals to be voted on at the annual general meeting. Perhaps the most important, he said, is a

proposal to add another member at large to the DSU board of directors.

"The rationale behind that is we have a board of 12, and as the population of Douglas is growing a lot over these past few years, we just—we need more," he said in a phone interview with the Other Press. "Instead of having our 12 representatives doing more work, we're just going to add another representative."

Directors at large are "jack-of-all-trades" board members who support the work of executive board members, according to Armutlu.

Armutlu said there will also be a number of motions to update the language of various DSU policies, including changing the titles of some roles within the DSU.

"We have one where it currently says 'aboriginal students' representative,'

and we're going to change it so it says 'Indigenous students' representative,' and then the other one: It's currently 'disabled students representative' and we're going to change it so it says 'students with disabilities representative,'" he said.

Members will vote on a number of other motions, Armutlu said, including motions to keep DSU policies in line with the new BC Societies Act, which compels organizations like the DSU to be transparent with their membership.

There will also be an annual report on the DSU's finances.

Armutlu said his favourite part of annual general meetings is the portion where members can pose questions to the board of directors.

"Question period is my favourite part because it's the time when you get to see the average student come up for

themselves and put an inquiry to the board," he said. "I enjoy that part quite a bit because we [on the board] really get to see what the average student cares about."

Armutlu said he encourages all members to attend the annual general meeting.

"They get to engage with the student union, they get to learn about the work that the reps have been doing for [the membership], they get to have their voice heard, and they get to vote on decisions that are being made, so it's an interesting and a good way to have an active role in the students' union," he said.

The annual general meeting will be held in the Aboriginal Gathering Place at the New Westminster campus and it is set to begin at 2:30 p.m.

- ☑ 'The Shape of Water' communicates emotion between its two leads without words
  - ☑ The improv world comes to Vancouver
  - ☑ Group art show reflects past, present, and future of Douglas College community
- And more!

# The best kind of rage

## > 'Blood Rage' board game review

Ed Appleby  
Senior Columnist

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Ragnarök. Just the name brings up images of burly manly men fighting for honour, Valkyries swooping into battle, and aliens voiced by Taika Waititi.

*Blood rage* (2015) is a land-claiming strategy game for two to four players, designed by Eric M. Lang and published by Asmodee. In the game, players build their clans, recruit mythical creatures, and invade the various realms of Viking mythology. The game lasts for three rounds, after which a realm is destroyed. Points are awarded for quests accomplished, the overall strength of your clan, and the glory you may find in Valhalla.

Despite the very metal-sounding name, the game plays like more of a combination of *Risk* (1959) and *7 Wonders*

(2010). There is a passed hand draw phase at the beginning of each round, and the multitude of ways to score points means that almost every strategy is viable. During my first play through, I managed to have my own "blood rage" moment as my strategy completely fell apart in the second round, only to regroup and adopt a new strategy for the third that allowed me to make a good showing by the end. I also may have raged so hard I woke my host's baby... Sorry.

The depth of the rules may be a little intimidating for first-time players, and misinterpretations may occur during the first game or two, but the overall gameplay and multitude of strategies gives the game a lot of replay value. Anyone interested in the delicate art of miniature painting will find another level of enjoyment, as the game pieces are exquisitely designed.

I probably wouldn't recommend the game to first-time players, but more experienced gamers will find a lot of depth and value in this game, especially if they're into complex, strategy-heavy games.



Illustration by Ed Appleby

# Poetry and activism in our city

## > Spotlight on Jillian Christmas and Vancouver Poetry House

Katie Czenczek  
Staff Writer

Poetry isn't dead, folks. It's alive and well and has made Vancouver a staple for aspiring writers to flock to. With all the numerous cafes in the city acting as the perfect venues for spoken word poets, Vancouver has become known for its rich poetry scene.

Vancouver Poetry House helps promote and engage the community of poets and audience members through youth initiatives, festivals, and events that support poets. Events such as the Verses Festival of Words, Hullabaloo, and WordPlay have all started as a part of the Vancouver Poetry House collective. Vancouver Poetry Slam is the longest running slam in Canada, which has been running for 21 years now and is how Vancouver Poetry House came to be.

In an interview with The Other Press, Jillian Christmas—Artistic Director of Verses Festival of Words and Coordinator at the Vancouver Poetry Slam—explained exactly what makes Vancouver such a unique landscape for poetry.

"I think that Vancouver, much like London, [has become] a place that—for whatever reason—people from all over go to for poetry. I think there's something about the idea of the Wild West that brings forth a lot of artistic minds and independent creators. I also think that there's a lot of real richness of Indigenous work on the West Coast, in part to do with the [unceded] land that contributes to the sort of resilience and resistance found in their work. It crops up out of

Strathcona and the history of the black community too. We [are] lucky to be at the intersection of those historic stories."

Christmas further added that she made the move from Ontario to Vancouver for exactly that reason.

"There's a really wonderful and warm community of people—not just in the slam scene—but also across the city. It's a literary city that I have come to learn from and support," she said.

She also discussed Verses Festival of Words and Vancouver Poetry House and the importance of getting people from communities who often do not have a voice to contribute.

"We like to support artistry coming out of communities that don't typically get the same amount of stage space or

promotion. One of the main goals of [Vancouver Poetry House and Verses] is to create and increase spaces for marginalized voices; it's fundamental to what we do. Basically, my entire career is based around speaking out through the creative process. As an organizer and an artist, I know how important it is to have spaces for that kind of work. That, to me, is where my activism lays, in creating spaces [for marginalized people]."

For those who have never read their poetry to an audience before, Christmas suggested they come on out and see any of the shows happening around Vancouver.

"I always say [to newcomers], first come out to a show. Not necessarily our show, but the Slam happens to be a particularly good place to launch things.

My advice is to take the leap, and, in small increments, to detach yourself from the idea of safety. What makes performing poetry, as opposed to writing that's only on the page, is the sense of community you get from saying your poems to an audience. You can get immediate feedback from the audience members and are able to connect with people in ways that you normally couldn't."

Be sure to check out some of the slam events happening around Vancouver, such as the Vancouver Poetry Slam. Running every Monday at 7 p.m. at Café Deux Soleils, the slam consists of three sections: Open mic, a single feature poet, and ending off with a poetry slam competition. Who knows, maybe one day you'll go for the mic.



Photo of Jillian Christmas via The Great Black North



# The improv world comes to Vancouver

› US teams bring some laughs in improv festival

Jerrison Oracion  
Senior Columnist

The Throwdown International Theatresports Festival is happening now in the Improv Centre, and the festival—presented by the Vancouver Theatresports League—brings the best of the improv world to Vancouver.

In the past two weeks, the members of the league were put into teams to take part in a competition where the teams play a game of Theatresports until one of them ultimately wins. This week, five teams from five improv groups around the world will compete until one of them emerges victorious, and the team that wins will battle the top team locally in a final that will be held on Sunday, January 21. Also, the improv groups will showcase the unique aspects of their improv games that the rest of the improv groups do not do. The three weeks will create a lot of improvised and funny moments.

For the festival this year, the Vancouver League decided to invite five improv groups from the United States because the league will host the International Theatresports Institute Conference next year. Those groups include Bellingham's Upfront Theatre, Portland's Curious Comedy Theatre, Cambridge's ImprovBoston, Philadelphia's



Photo via Granvilleisland.com

The Future, and Orlando's SAK Comedy Lab, which won the international section of the festival in the past two years since 2016. SAK Comedy Lab was very good when I saw them in the festival last year, though the other groups that were invited last year also did a lot of great things. Each of the five improv groups has a style that represents the city that they are from, creating a lot of interesting material about

the things that happen in their city.

The winners of each game will be determined the audience, so if you like something that you saw from one improv group, cheer on that group. Some of the performances will also include showcases of specific groups, and when you see a game between two of the teams, you might see a showcase from one of the other three groups. There will

also be times when all of the groups in a day play a game of Theatresports, and they will likely have a very fun time.

The Throwdown International Theatresports Festival showcases what other improv groups are doing and presents a lot of moments that will cause you to laugh a lot. The Festival is taking place now in the Improv Centre on Granville Island until January 21.

# 'The Shape of Water' communicates emotion between its two leads without words

› The film relies on other elements to show their connection

Veronica MacKillop  
Columnist

Winning two Golden Globes and scoring 93 per cent on Rotten Tomatoes, it's clear that *The Shape of Water* is one of the standout movies of the year, even though neither of the main characters speak throughout the entire film.

Elisa Esposito (Sally Hawkins) is mute. She is able to hear people, and she communicates using sign language. The movie focuses on her relationship with Amphibian Man (Doug Jones), who does not speak any human language, but makes noises that humans can't understand.

So what is it that makes this movie connect so strongly with audiences despite the lack of dialogue between the two featured performers? It's not just because the side characters are so strong, or because it relies on explanations, it's due to the connection that the two leads are able to convey without words. The roles played by Hawkins and Jones have such a strong presence that they don't need dialogue to tell a story. The two use movement and emotion to present their characters, and the lack of words actually makes their on-screen chemistry even stronger because it doesn't rely on speech. A line in the movie says that the amphibious creature is "capable of language, understanding emotions"—which perfectly sums up what the film does without dialogue. Both characters



Promotional Image of 'The Shape of Water' via Fox Searchlight

are capable of communicating with each other, despite not being able to speak.

Without actually having lines, the actors rely on so much more to convey emotion. The silence also helps to portray a sort of innocent quality to the love story that makes you root for the main characters even more. This is used in contrast to the antagonist of the movie, Richard Strickland, who is always seen yelling and getting upset that he can't understand what Elisa is saying.

The silence between the two

protagonists is beautiful, in a way. It compliments the ambience and sensibly matches the underwater setting. The film also uses music as a means of communication, as it is often how the two connect.

Director Guillermo del Toro does a brilliant job blending a variety of different genres to create this movie. It is a fairy tale romance, science fiction story, a classic Hollywood film, a heist movie, and a good old-fashioned monster movie. Many viewers and critics are comparing the

film to *Beauty and the Beast* and *Creature from the Black Lagoon*. As the director of *Pan's Labyrinth*, *Hellboy*, *Crimson Peak*, and *Mimic*, del Toro is known for creating big, fantastical movies with a mix of both realistic and otherworldly elements.

*The Shape of Water* is a film that uses much more than words to communicate the relationship between its two main characters. Without speech, it allows the pair to communicate and express emotion using a variety of techniques from del Toro.



# Group art show reflects past, present, and future of Douglas College community

> Art as hobby, career, and passion

Caroline Ho  
Arts Editor

*Past Present Future*, the Amelia Douglas Gallery's latest exhibition, celebrates creativity from all corners of Douglas—students, employees, and artists at heart.

The in-house group show contains over 90 works by 32 artists who are current students, current employees, alumni, and retired employees of Douglas. With photography, paintings, drawings, sculptures, video installations, and more, the diversity of styles matches the diverse backgrounds and experiences within the college. The Other Press had the chance to speak with a few of the artists at the gallery's opening reception last Thursday evening.

Joan Barnet taught in the EASL Department for 17 years, and after retiring she had the chance to pursue her lifelong hobby of ceramics.

"When I retired, I could play in the mud full time," Barnet said in an interview with the Other Press.

Three of her ceramic fish sculptures—created using the raku firing method of pottery—are on display in *Past Present Future*. In addition to crafting fish, Barnet says she has also been taking lessons in music—piano, classical guitar, and

voice—since retiring from teaching.

Other artists exhibiting in the show have found different ways to juggle work and art, including Marilyn Smitshoek, who teaches English Upgrading and has been at Douglas for over 20 years. She said she considered being a full-time artist when she was younger, but decided against it as a career. However, she's now able to balance between her creative hobby and teaching, with both activities requiring a comparable level of attention, she told the Other Press.

"Whether I'm teaching, I kind of lose myself in that. When I'm doing artwork, again, I'm totally focused on what I'm doing, and the rest of the world disappears," said Smitshoek. "It's a nice balance to doing my job. It's a nice escape."

In this exhibition, she's showcasing three vivid coloured pencil illustrations of hydrangeas, which she drew when she was off work due to surgery.

Eric Hannan, who teaches singing and directs choirs in the Music Department, also appreciates the complementarity of making music and making art. He creates stoneware pots and bowls that are both functional and pleasing to see and feel. He finds the two artistic avenues of music and pottery to be, in a sense, opposite processes; while a musical performance takes a long time to prepare for often only a single concert or two, a pot can be

made far more quickly, in days or minutes, and the product can last for centuries.

In addition, Hannan often works with many people at once through his work as a choir director, whereas pottery allows him to be alone with his work.

"It's just me and the clay, so it's great therapy," he said.

Carissa Chmelyk hopes to combine her creative passion and her career even more. Chmelyk is a student in the Stagecraft and Event Technology program at Douglas, where she aims to do set painting. At *Past Present Future* she's exhibiting an acrylic portrait of her sister, a piece full of bold colour and movement.

Portraits like the one she's displaying, Chmelyk said, take a lot longer, since she's able to spend as much time as she wants on the image. Set painting, on the other hand, gets her to work a lot more quickly, as well as allowing her to use many different kinds of material, styles, and colour schemes.

She's never exhibited in any art shows before, but when she found out about *Past Present Future* from seeing advertisements in the Concourse and hearing about it from an instructor, she said it seemed like a "perfect way to start." After this, she hopes to find more shows to display her artwork in.

*Past Present Future* is also the first show for student Samuel Chang, who has

three of his digital pieces up. Although he is studying Modern Languages at Douglas, he hopes to someday work as an illustrator.

At the reception, he said he's been very inspired by seeing the works of fellow Douglas artists, particularly some of the incredibly detailed photography. Although he doesn't think he'll take up photography himself, he plans to at least imitate some of the angles in the photos on display.

Smitshoek has participated in several of the past employee and student group shows at the Amelia Douglas Gallery, and she said she always feels inspired by the range of works and talent here, especially since Douglas is not an art school but is still a place full of creativity.

Art shows like this one, she said, which bring together people from all levels of experience—in art and in life—are a great reminder that everyone needs practice to improve as an artist, and anyone with an interest should absolutely pursue it.

"A lot of people say to me, 'I'd like to do it, but I'm no good at it.' Well, the only way to get good at it is do it," she said.

*Past Present Future* will be up in the Amelia Douglas Gallery until February 24.

*Clockwise from the top left: Art by Carissa Chmelyk, Pottery by Eric Hannan, Art by Samuel Chang and Olivia Chen, Art by Marilyn Smitshoek, Ceramic art by Joan Barnet*



Photos by Analyn Cuarto and Lauren Kelly



# LIFE & STYLE

- ✓ YouTube's cherry-picking history
- ✓ Black is the new black
- ✓ Four ways to cook with alcohol

And more!

## The Lazy Bastard's Kitchen: Pasta with crab alfredo sauce

› Low-effort food that doesn't suck

Duncan Fingarson  
Senior Columnist

### Ingredients:

- 2 cans crab meat
- 1 jar alfredo sauce
- 1 box pasta of choice
- 1 red bell pepper (diced)
- 1/2 sweet onion (diced)
- 2 cloves garlic (minced)
- Olive oil

### Optional:

- 1 small bag peeled frozen pre-cooked shrimp
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup water
- Salt to taste

This pasta is both delicious and low effort, perfect for the lazy bastard's kitchen. It's a bit light on the vegetable matter, so you may wish to toss together a salad as an accompaniment.

To make it, you'll need two pots: A smaller one for the sauce, and a bigger one for the pasta. You'll also need a frying pan, a cutting board, a big knife, and something to stir with. We want limited cleanup as well as limited effort.

To start, boil some water in the big pot. Add a little salt to prevent it from boiling over, and a drizzle of oil to stop the noodles from sticking together.

While you're waiting for the water to boil, pour the jar of alfredo into the smaller pot and set to medium heat. You don't need to cook this, just warm it up. If you want to stretch the sauce a

little further and lower the fat content, you can add a bit of milk to it.

Heat some olive oil in your frying pan. Put the onion in the pan first, then add the garlic and pepper after 2-3 minutes. If you have some herbs lying around, you can add those for some extra flavour.

The water should be boiling by now. If it is, add the box of pasta. Pasta cooks fast, so keep an eye on it. Open the tins of crab, scrape those into the sauce. If you have shrimp, you can add those here too. The vegetables are done when the onion is semi-translucent. Toss those in as well, and stir the sauce up. Remove from heat and check the pasta—the best way is to taste some. It's done when still slightly firm to the bite.

Drain the pasta, pour the sauce on, and serve.



Photo by Ang Sarap via Pinterest

## the otherplaylist

Brittney MacDonald  
Life and Style Editor

Ready to say goodbye to all those annoying Christmas carols? Yeah, me too. Now that the holidays are officially done and over with I have found solace in settling back into my routine of surfing Spotify for new tunes to listen to while I work and play. Thankfully, the rest of the crew over here at the OP has been doing the same. Here's our list of must-listens for this January.

- Finesse by Bruno Mars ft. Cardi B (Mercedes)
- Never Start by Middle Kids (Jacey)
- Dreams by Fleetwood Mac (Katie)
- Red Cold River by Breaking Benjamin (Caroline)
- Feelings by Hayley Kiyoko (Rebecca)
- Deep Blue by Arcade Fire (Greg)
- Cruise by Francis and the Lights (Jake)
- Dream Catcher by Pinc Loods (Jessica)
- Some Things Never Change by Miracle of Sound (Duncan)
- Tadow by Masego (Ed)
- Adore You by NAO (Jillian)
- Kill You by Eminem (Brittney)



## #DOUGLIFE

Share your photos with us on Instagram using the hashtag #DougLife, for a chance to be featured in the paper!



kidmakunouchi



4 likes

kidmakunouchi Life of a college student

#douglascollege

1 DAY AGO

This week's post is by @kidmakunouchi



## Is it gambling?

### *A retrospective on the year of the loot box*

**By Duncan Fingarson, Senior Columnist**

Loot boxes in video games are not a new thing, but last year saw more games taking them on as a monetization model, along with more controversy surrounding the idea than ever before. Loot boxes as an idea (a box containing randomized digital loot available for purchase with real money) originally appeared in Chinese games over a decade ago. The first use of loot boxes by a North American publisher, however, was in the Team Fortress 2 update that introduced the Mann Co. Supply Crate. Shortly after, Team Fortress 2 went free to play.

Since 2010, loot boxes have popped up here and there. Star Trek Online, as well as Neverwinter and other MMOs have used them as an alternative revenue source for free to play enabled games. The first use in a full-price title was in the multiplayer mode of Mass Effect 3 in 2012.

Then came Overwatch.

In 2016, Blizzard's team-based online FPS, heavily inspired by Team Fortress 2, released with loot boxes as a core component of its level-up system. The boxes contained cosmetic items, and were either earned through leveling up or purchased with real money from the store. Overwatch was a critical and commercial success, and it opened the floodgates.

It's easier these days to find a Triple-A game with loot boxes than without them. Star Wars Battlefront II was heavily criticized for including in-game advantages in its loot boxes, instead of purely cosmetic items. Similarly, Middle Earth: Shadow of War features the ability to buy loot boxes containing in-game orcs, in case actually playing the game is too much of a bother. Call of Duty: WWII features loot boxes that are visible to the other players in game, so that other people can watch the boxes being opened. Bungie's Destiny 2 has bright engrams, bought from an in-game mer-

chant with a secondary currency that can be obtained with real money.

The randomized reward system, coupled with more desirable items existing at higher tiers of rarity, makes the boxes a money sink. It might take many purchases before a player gets the item they want, and this repeat purchase loop highly incentivizes publishers to put loot boxes in their games, even in cases when the loot boxes are detrimental to the core gameplay experience.

To make things worse, people are bad at probability. There's a reason the Gambler's Fallacy is called what it is, and one only has to walk into a casino to see it at work. A lot of modern loot boxes have flashy opening animations, and in some cases the rarer items are even flashier. It's reminiscent of slot machines in presentation and in implementation. But is it truly gambling?

Certainly the governments of many countries think so. In China, law requires all games with loot boxes to disclose the odds. The Australian regulatory commission has stated that they believe loot boxes are gambling. The State of Hawaii wants to combat loot boxes as well, deeming them "predatory." Belgium is investigating whether or not to regulate such games as gambling, as is the Netherlands. The issue, however, is not that clear.

The UK Gambling Commission issued a position paper in March 2017 that touches, among other things, on loot boxes. The commission found that, though loot boxes closely resemble gambling through the elements of chance and wagering a stake against a prize, it is not licensable unless the prize has some monetary value. If it's restricted to in-game use, it's not a duck, no matter how much it quacks like one. By a strict definition, they're right. Loot boxes offer the elements of chance, but the elements of stake and prize are more debatable. In one



sense, it's impossible to lose when you buy a loot box; the contents might not be what you want, but you'll always get something. On a slot machine, there's no such guarantee. Loot boxes are more akin to a lucky dip or grab bag, where the contents are unknown but never nonexistent. The waters are further muddied by the fact that loot boxes contain digital items only, often not able to be exchanged for currency, and thus holding no intrinsic monetary value.

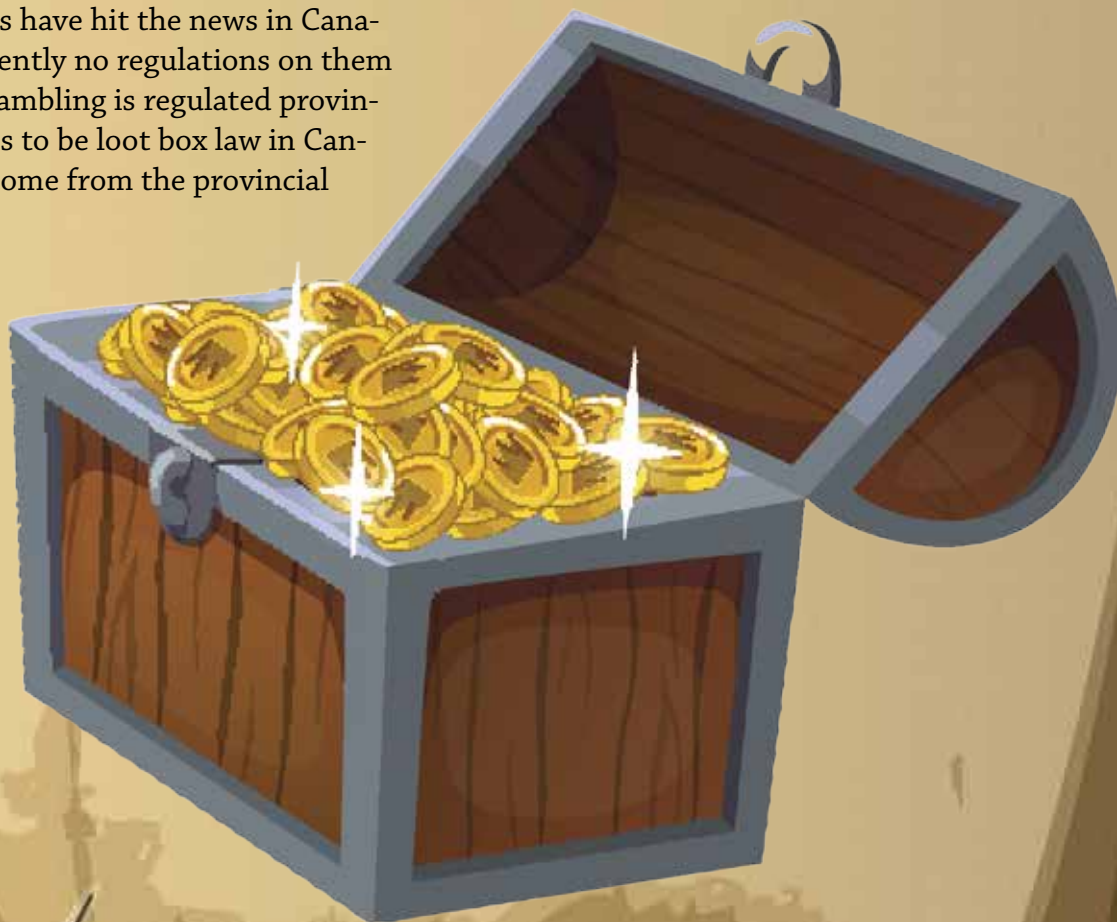
That said, loot boxes do look an awful lot like gambling, even if they cannot be regulated as such. Everything about loot boxes is designed to get players to want to buy more, sometimes to the tune of hundreds of dollars. Oftentimes there's a second virtual currency that is bought with real money, then exchanged for the box, in an effort to obfuscate how much actual money is being spent. There's also the same sort of operant conditioning effect that happens with gambling; because the rewards are randomized, there's always the chance that the next one will be the one you want. Or the next one. Or the next one... It's a vicious cycle.

Though loot boxes have hit the news in Canada, there are currently no regulations on them in our country. Gambling is regulated provincially, so if there is to be loot box law in Canada, it'll have to come from the provincial government.

There is, then, no solid answer for the question "Are loot boxes gambling?" The closest that has been arrived at so far is a series of "Yes, but..." and

"No, but..."-type answers. At least in BC, it's not yet regulated as such. Should it be? Quite possibly. Certainly something should be done to help protect consumers. The video game industry has not shown any particular inclination to regulate itself, and why would it? Loot box systems make money hand over fist. Until people get better at thinking about and handling their money—something which hasn't happened in all the time we've had money, and is unlikely to happen any time soon—or the next big thing comes along, it looks like loot boxes are here to stay. Community backlash has forced some games to modify or disable their loot boxes, but nobody has yet removed them completely, and more and more games keep trying to find ways to squeeze them in.

The only option to truly avoid loot boxes is to not buy games that contain them. There are still some publishers putting out games loot box-free, and the indie scene is littered with quality titles if you know where to look. At the very least, when buying and playing games, try to avoid paying twice.





# Four ways to cook with alcohol

> Spike your winter with these saucy suggestions!

Sophie Isbister  
Columnist

It seems like the months of January and February cause people to slow down on their drinking. Whether you're detoxing from the holidays, following through on a New Year's resolution, or taking part in the BC Cancer Foundation's "Lose the Booze" challenge, taking a break from alcohol is never a bad thing... but that doesn't mean you can't experiment with the hard stuff in other ways.

I've been cooking a lot more lately, and as I upgrade my skills I've been tackling more complex and difficult recipes. A lot of these involve alcohol. Using beer, wine, or liquor in your dishes is a great way to add depth and flavour to your meal, and if you're trying to stay sober, don't worry; the heat of cooking burns off most of the alcohol, leaving behind a rich flavour.

I've compiled four possible ways you can spike your food! Don't worry about buying the best booze for these dishes. A mid-range wine or cheap liquor will spice up a meal just as well as a pricier bottle.

## Add beer to chili

Whether I'm making chili on the stove or in the slow cooker, I always sauté my finely-chopped veggies on the stove first. That's when you can add the beer. I dice up onions, peppers, celery, whatever I have on hand, cook until soft, and then pour in most of a 355ml can of beer. Let it cook until the beer is half gone, or even fully evaporated to leave no trace of alcohol. The first recipe that suggested

this method called for a Mexican beer like Corona or Dos Equis, but I had some stout on hand so I used that. It imparted a rich flavour on my chili and I really think it took it to the next level!

## Add white wine to risotto

You may have heard that making risotto is scary, given that it involves hunching over a stove and stirring for an hour. At least, that's what I used to think. However, while this creamy rice dish may be time-consuming, it is totally simple. The recipe I used didn't call for wine, but my chef friend suggested I toss some white wine in at the beginning of the cooking process. Use a half a cup of a dry white wine, like pinot grigio, in place of whatever liquid your recipe calls for. It will cook off during the process and leave behind a touch of acidity that will add complexity to the finished risotto.

## Deglaze a pan with red wine

You know when you sear or cook meat in a steel or cast-iron pan and you're left with what seems like little burnt bits on the pan? Well, those aren't actually ruined food. They're like the shy person at the party who just needs a little bit of alcohol to be coaxed out. This is where deglazing comes in. You can deglaze with any liquid, like water or broth, but wine is also a great choice! While your pan is still hot but you have removed the meat to rest (or cook further in the oven), pour a cup or so of any red wine in the pan and scrape up all those little bits. You can make it into a delicious sauce to eat with your meal, or if the meat



Photo via SeriousEats.com

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Using beer, wine, or liquor in your dishes is a great way to add depth and flavour to your meal.

you were cooking was for a stew or chili, add the deglazed liquid to your pot.

## Marinate meat with liquor

Marinating a cheap cut of meat can be easily done with whatever flavourful liquids you have on hand, and if you add gin, vodka, rum, or whiskey to that

marinade, it helps add flavour to the dish and tenderizes the meat even more! I marinate my cuts of meat for at least 30 minutes before cooking. Don't add too much liquor, but start with just a half ounce for a few steaks or chicken breast. Use light coloured liquors for white meats, and dark liquors for beef or venison.

# New Year, 'new' me?

> How to handle your (inevitably) broken resolutions

Jillian McMullen  
Staff Writer

So here we are, a few weeks into the "New Year," and like many, you've probably made a few resolutions. I've found that these first few weeks of the year are always when people are the most committed to their resolutions; when whatever habit they are trying to develop is most likely to become an everyday norm. Unfortunately, that kind of sudden intensity isn't always sustainable. According to a Forbes report, only about nine per cent of people who make resolutions actually keep them. So, if you've already slept through a few of those early morning boot camps or neglected some class readings for "just one more episode," here's some steps to healthily approach failure—crying on the couch over a (second) bowl of ice cream not included.

The first thing you should do is acknowledge the shortcomings of making resolutions. We make resolutions to fix problems, so making resolutions inherently suggests *you have a problem* which you must resolve. Obviously, resolutions are not often born out of positivity, they are born out of insecurity regarding a personal trait or behavior someone decided is somehow

undesirable. There's a lot riding, then, on the success or failure of these resolutions. Your personal sense of value becomes wrapped up in whether or not you change that "undesirable" trait, and that's why we feel a lot of guilt when that change simply doesn't happen.

For those reasons, I haven't made a resolution in a few years now and I actually think that, coupled with a shift in intention, I've been able to accomplish more without them. My suggestion for failing resolutions is to simply not make them. Rather, set reasonable goals instead.

I know it sounds like the same thing dressed up in different clothing, and honestly—it is! But it is the attitude you have when approaching these goals that becomes important. Find something you'd like to accomplish this year, and make sure it's something you actually want to do. Personally, my goal is to save up enough money to go travel in Southeast Asia by next winter. I'm reaching towards an experience I'll really enjoy, so I am already appreciating the work I'm doing to get myself there as I've taken the "chore aspect" out of it.

Once you've found that thing you'd like to accomplish, break it down. A goal broken down into steps becomes a plan, and a plan supported with a commitment to it becomes attainable. What I like to do is plan out what steps I can take on a



Illustration by Cara Seccafien

daily, weekly, and monthly basis to reach my goal because that's how you form habits. Habits are what keep you reaching and moving forward even when life inevitably throws an obstacle in your way.

And that's the last thing to remember: The road towards accomplishing your goal isn't a one-way street. Don't be discouraged if it feels like things are working against you—

even if one of those things happens to be yourself. You're allowed to mess up and you're allowed to do things that aren't determined by the goal you have set for yourself. The way that I look at it is that a goal is supposed to work for you, not the other way around. It is healthy to have something you're aiming towards, but it's definitely okay if you end up landing somewhere else.



# Black is the new black

## > Fashion on the Golden Globes 2018 red carpet

Brittney MacDonald  
Life & Style Editor

If you were to see me in person, you might fully comprehend what I mean when I say that I love the colour—or “shade” for all you sticklers—black. The majority of my wardrobe makes me look like a trendy Tumblr slob applying for the Defense Against the Dark Arts teaching position at Hogwarts. So, when I learned that pretty much everyone attending the Golden Globes this year would be walking the red carpet looking like they were about to stomp the yard at the world’s most fashionable funeral, I was ecstatic!

After I got over my initial happiness, I did go to the effort of finding out why everyone was donning black this year. Unfortunately—or perhaps fortunately, depending on how you view it—it was to protest the rampant sexual harassment in Hollywood. This made the feminist in me kind of mad, but also kind of happy. I love when fashion has a purpose other than just “looking good.” That being said, there were a couple low-lights to this year’s event, so let’s talk about that.

The first misstep of the night was Saoirse Ronan, wearing a black and silver asymmetrical gown from Atelier Versace. The gown itself is beautiful, but putting a dress with such wide shoulder pads on such a petite figure

creates fit issues where there shouldn’t be. Not saying that petite people can’t wear shoulder pads, but you do have to be careful with how extreme you go. Had Versace tailored the shoulder pads better, this would have been a great way for Ronan to give the illusion of a much more powerful silhouette. However, because the shoulder pads are so large, it also throws the bust of the dress off so the outline of the shoulder pads is very apparent when it should look seamless.

Next up is *Outlander* star Catriona Balfe wearing Chanel. Unlike Ronan, I don’t think there is any way of saving this look—it’s just hideous. Looking at runway photos, even the model looked ridiculous. The problem with this dress is that it is weirdly proportioned. Not enough so that it is cool, but just enough that it makes whomever is wearing it look like they have a super long torso with tiny little legs. The issue here is that the seam for the ruffle at the bottom is designed to be just below the knee, when—in this style of dress—it should hit directly above it, partially for movement’s sake: It makes it easier to walk, but it also exaggerates a woman’s natural shape, i.e. it hugs the curve of her thighs and hips before tapering down. When the seam is below the knee it gives the illusion that the knee is a lot lower down on the leg, which in turn throws off the entire look and sections the body in a strange way.



Photo of Saoirse Ronan wearing Atelier Versace via Shoko.fr

Photo of Catriona Balfe wearing Chanel via Popsugar.com

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I love when fashion has a purpose other than just “looking good.”

# YouTube’s cherry-picking history

## > How a recent scandal has brought to light the company’s lack of change

Brittney MacDonald  
Life & Style Editor

With Logan Paul’s disturbing antics in Japan now coming into question, YouTube finds itself in the hot seat yet again. Accusations of the site “cherry-picking,” or showing favoritism towards channels and creators that make money for the YouTube brand, have flooded the internet. Many content creators are angry that their independence has essentially labelled them as second-class citizens with regards to the platform itself.

The majority of the channels and creators on YouTube run independent of the brand. In other words, they are in full control of what content they put out, and are generally in no way endorsed by YouTube beyond being featured on the front page if their video is labelled as “trending.” Their revenue doesn’t come from the platform, but rather the platform’s relationship with various companies through advertising. If a video is “monetized,” there will be a commercial played before, during, or after it—sometimes all three, depending on how long the video is. The minimal revenue for this commercial is then split between YouTube and the creator. The longer you watch a video, the more

money a creator makes, and the more views that that video gets, the more money the creator makes. In order for a video to be monetized, it must follow a strict set of guidelines that YouTube puts out. In other words, the video and creator must be “advertiser-friendly.” Age-restricted videos make less money because less advertisers are willing to put their product in front of something that could be controversial or sexual in nature.

Originally, YouTube was accused of favoritism when more and more celebrity channels started to pop up. Specifically, online content creators found that their videos were being demonetized by YouTube’s flagging algorithm. The algorithm searches all the videos uploaded to the site, and flags ones that it deems are possibly inappropriate. A human operator will then review the video and either restore the monetization, or will leave it disabled. At least, that is how it’s supposed to work. However, the process was apparently taking far too long. Online videos receive the majority of their views in the first 24 hours they are uploaded, and with this method in place, many creators were losing out on hundreds if not thousands of dollars as they waited for their video to be reviewed. Controversy arose as larger, “celebrity” channels—ones that were

run by television networks, film studios, or famous celebrities—were not being flagged, and therefore were receiving what seemed to be preferential treatment from the website itself, even when their content was similar to the content put out by the independent creators.

YouTube vowed to improve their algorithm and their policies in order to fully embrace their creators and audience, but with the latest controversy regarding Logan Paul, I believe that this is clearly not the case.

Despite the fact that Paul’s video featured flaggable keywords in the title, as well as a blatantly inappropriate thumbnail containing a dead body, the video was still monetized and remained on the platform until Paul’s media team removed it. In the rules of YouTube it states that any video containing “... disturbing or disgusting video footage” or features “graphic violence” will be automatically removed from the platform, not just demonetized. However, Paul’s Aokigahara video remained, was even advertised as “suggested content” for many YouTube users, and was a primary video on the platform’s front page until its removal. This has led many content creators to question a possible “whitelisting” or preferential treatment towards creators that are endorsed by

the YouTube brand. Paul was on the Google Preferred List, meaning he received top-tier advertising revenue through his channel. He was also the star of a popular YouTube Red film, and was in the process of filming a sequel.

In truth, Paul suffered no overt penalty for his actions from YouTube until recently, when the controversy and subsequent backlash forced the company to act. His sequel film was canceled and he was removed from the Google Preferred List, but his channel itself received no penalty. In fact, the Aokigahara video as well as Paul’s other videos from Japan—the majority of which are being accused of being disrespectful and racist—netted the creator over \$90,000 in advertising revenue.

Some people are even accusing YouTube of dragging their feet on purpose in order to profit from the controversy itself, but the majority of YouTube/Google account holders—both content creators and viewers—are more concerned with the disturbing facts this cherry-picking scandal has brought to light, and how it may be remedied moving forward. However, YouTube has remained mostly silent with regards to any recent changes to their practices.



# OPINIONS

- ✓ We need more male support groups on college campuses
- ✓ YouTube is killing content creation
- And more!

## Athleisure is bullshit

> It's the worst of both worlds and you don't need it

Sophie Isbister  
Columnist

The first two decades of the 21st century will be remembered not for flying cars and robot butlers, but for being the era when humans finally gave up on fashion. It started innocently enough the first time someone wore yoga pants to the office on casual Friday, and then before we knew it, every second person on the street was clad head to toe in Lycra. It may have come on quick, but the trend we now know as “athleisure” is no flash in the pan.

Athleisure is a style of clothing. The word is a portmanteau of “athletic” and “leisure,” and I am here to tell you that it is bullshit. Now, I don't hate athleisure because I am a champion of sartorial excellence. I don't hate athleisure because its ubiquity approaches a Huxleyan vision of a future where everyone wears matching jumpsuits, and I am certainly no elitist; I don't hate athleisure simply because it's basic.

No, my reasons for thinking that this (unfortunately) enduring trend needs to die are a lot simpler than that: I think it's a marketing trend that got lucky and took off;

I think instead of doing one thing well, it does two things poorly; and I think we just don't need it!

Unfortunately, too many members of the public seem to think we do. Athleisure wear has been steadily growing in Canada, showing gains every year and in 2016 reaching \$4 billion in sales, according to an article by The Financial Post. The origin of this demon hybrid fashion rests close to home: Lululemon, the pioneer of wearing your workout clothes everywhere, was founded in Vancouver in 1998.

Lululemon's popularity steadily rose for over a decade before it was featured on Future President Oprah Winfrey's Favourite Things list in 2010—at which point, this category of clothing exploded into the public consciousness. Everyone needed their own pair of lulus, whether they did yoga or just ate yogurt.

And if you have Club Monaco taste on a Joe Fresh budget, well, good news for you: The market demanded that athleisure be available at all price points, for all people. You can now get mediocre stretchy fabric garments almost anywhere. Marketing told us that we, busy millennials, need this type of fashion. We need the freedom to drag our bodies from school, to work, to barre class,

and, finally, to our second job—while our high-tech pants soak up all the sweat.

Athleisure's hybridization of function is something we've been told we need, but do we really? How hard is it to toss a spare set of clothes into your backpack? Athleisure has taken athletic clothing, which is great, and leisure clothing, which is fantastic, and turned them into a barely palatable mess of straps that I don't know where to put. The last time I went to buy workout clothes, it was a disaster. Everything had non-functioning zippers, unnecessary slits up the side, and armholes that were way too big. Maybe some of you would look at that disaster and see an opportunity for an Instagram-worthy mirror selfie at the gym, but I just saw a waste of perfectly good technical fabric.

Look, friends. I know it might be tempting to kill two birds with one stone and purchase a garment that you can wear whether you're flailing around on a yoga mat or flopping down in front of your Netflix machine, but I urge you: Just say no to athleisure! Try purchasing some classic leisure clothes like pajamas; you'll be a lot more comfortable lounging around in those. Save the Spandex for the gym.



Photo of Gigi Hadid via Whowhatwear.com

## Please don't overwork yourself

> Making time for rest and relaxation has never been more important

Jessica Berget  
Opinions Editor

Some people think if you're not stressed out, anxious, and exhausted, that you're not working hard enough—but nothing could be further from the truth. If you're experiencing any of these feelings it's most likely because you are already working too hard, and you desperately need a break.

Overworking is a common problem in many adult's lives, but especially among students. Between balancing multiple jobs, classes, studying, volunteering, exercising, maintaining a social circle, and even eating, it's a wonder how anyone finds the time to pee—much less relax.

As much as we like to joke about our unhealthy lifestyles that come with being overworked—being underpaid, not sleeping or eating right, excessive smoking or drinking, and chugging down gallons of coffee to feel alive again—it is a serious epidemic that we should not be taking so lightly. Even just typing out these activities makes me anxious, so the idea that being constantly stressed and exhausted are good indicators of hard work is not only wrong—it's an extremely unhealthy way to think.

People in Japan die from being overworked so much that there is even a word for it. “Karoshi”

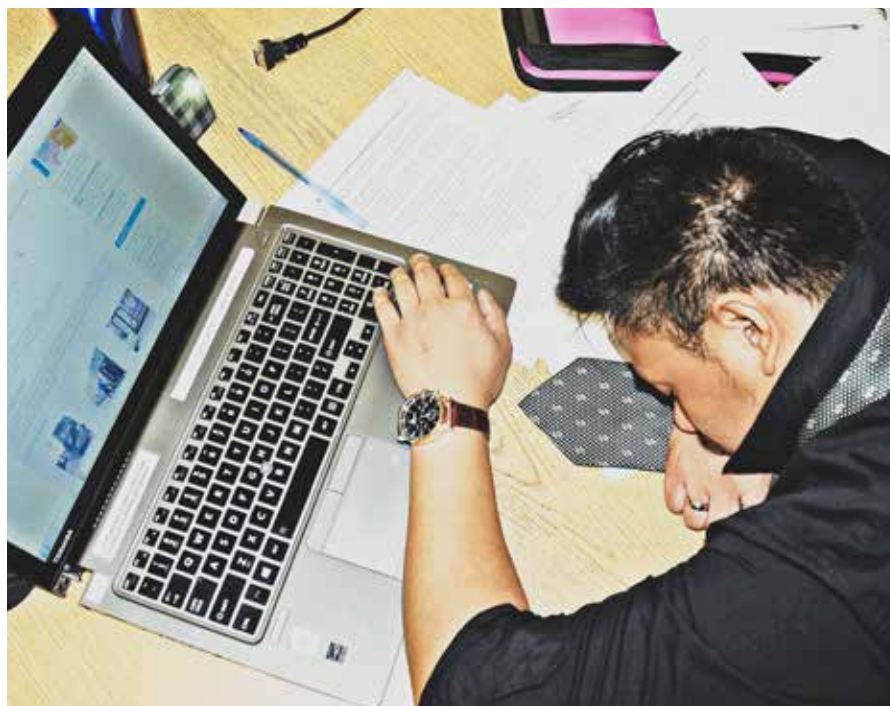


Photo by Analyn Cuarto

translated into English literally means “overwork death,” which is usually caused by cardiovascular issues. According to a report by Statistics Canada, Japanese researchers who examined the relationship between cardiovascular disease and long work hours hypothesized that working too much brings about unhealthy lifestyle habits such as “smoking, alcohol abuse, lack of physical exercise, sleeplessness,

poor eating habits, and fewer chances for medical examinations.”

Sound familiar?

Now, we are not nearly on the same level as Japan, but the correlation between being overworked and the physical, mental, and emotional toll it takes on our bodies has never been clearer, but overworking has become such a big part of our society that people continue to do it, whether they

are aware of it or not. For instance, many people say they don't consider checking emails as work, but I would argue it takes a lot of mental energy to formulate replies to work messages, so it is technically “work.” Learn to tune out those unimportant emails on your days off, and just chill out. It's for your health.

There are also many students who are in such a rush to graduate and get their degrees that they take four to five classes each semester while also juggling jobs and other responsibilities. If this is what you do, you are a much stronger person than I, and I admire the hell out of you. However, you are going to have the rest of your adult life to overwork yourself, so slow down, relax, and have fun—while you still can. Don't be afraid to take a semester off occasionally or take less classes if you feel you need it. There's only about two to three week breaks between semesters, but I would say that's not nearly enough time to unwind after taking multiple classes for four months straight. Take the time off when you can, because before you know it, you will have worked your entire life away.

Being constantly overwhelmed and on the verge of a mental breakdown does not equate efficiency and productivity, and that is something we should all learn to accept. If it's your day off, make it the most relaxing and restful day possible. You deserve it.



# I ain't afraid of no ghosts

› Lack of scientific evidence indicates ghosts are not real

Jessica Berget  
Opinions Editor

Do you believe in ghosts? If so, you're not alone. Ghosts and spirits are a common superstition among many societies and cultures. Stories of such supernatural phenomena are passed down from generation to generation around campfires, sleepovers, or as warnings to keep kids from walking in the forest after dark. Consequently, ghosts are one of the most widely-believed supernatural forces, with almost half of Canadians (47 per cent) being firm believers, and one in five (18 per cent) claiming they've been in the presence of a ghost.

The idea that our deceased friends and relatives continue to live among us in the spirit world is an old and frivolous one. There has been no scientific evidence to back up the fact that ghosts do exist, yet about half the population claims they do... but how, and why? Some people entertain the idea of ghosts purely because they want to get spooked. For others, it provides a sense of comfort and support that their lost loved ones aren't really gone, but are instead watching over and guiding them. Unfortunately, this also is a cause for a lot of fear in peoples' lives, with every creak of the floor and trick of the eyes being immediately cited as a ghostly encounter.

But let's get real (unlike ghosts). The strange happenings people attribute to ghostly or paranormal activities, such as a door opening on its own, something falling, or seeing a dead relative when you wake up in the middle of the night, can all be explained by one crazy concept: Science.

A door opening on its own most likely means your house doesn't have very heavy doors, or there was a draft. Things falling are just a by-product of gravity, and seeing your dead relative in the middle of the

night is a classic case of sleep paralysis, or just your mind playing tricks on you. People forget how powerful the mind can be. It can make you see or believe anything, especially if you're scared. It's basic psychology.

I have a hard time believing in ghosts for several reasons. For one, there is a sufficient lack of scientific evidence that proves they are real in any way. If paranormal investigation is in fact a science—and there are so many shows

nowadays that focuses on this very field of science—how is it that we have not found anything that proves their existence? And why does every spirit I hear about come from the Victorian era? If ghosts really exist, surely there must be spirits from at least the last 20 years. Another thing I cannot understand is the basis of what can, or cannot be a ghost. The very earth we stand on is teeming with life, and if everything that is alive has a

soul, how is it that there are no animal, or even plant ghosts? If ghosts can communicate with psychics, why aren't more murders being solved? These are the questions that haunt me, not ghosts.

In the end, the evidence for paranormal existence is as lacking as it was a century ago. If there turns out to be evidence of ghosts in the future, I would welcome it with open arms, but for now, no such luck.



Illustration by Cara Seccafi

# Boxing Day is here to stay

› Despite Black Friday's popularity, Boxing Day is not going anywhere

Jerrison Oracion  
Senior Columnist

Boxing Day has been a popular tradition in the past few decades. It's the day after Christmas where everyone lines up in front of a store and waits until they can go inside to get deals on popular and normally expensive items—mainly electronics. Despite Boxing Day and Black Friday having a lot of similarities, they are some differences between the two shopping holidays. Boxing Day is the Canadian equivalent of Black Friday, in terms of shopping holidays. They are relatively the same in terms of sales and advertisements except on Boxing Day you do not have everyone running inside the store and fighting crowds to get good deals.

Since the beginning of online shopping with Amazon and Black Friday coming to Canada, the lineups on Boxing Day have started to get smaller. Many people have thought that this would be the end of the Canadian shopping



Photo via NBC News

holiday, with Black Friday or online shopping taking its place. However, online shopping does not have the same experience as physically going into a store. Also, a lot of people continue to go to stores and malls to get items on sale, showing that Boxing Day is still a popular shopping holiday, and will still be around in the distant future.

Over the past few years when I go to stores on Boxing Day, I usually wait outside the store for at least an hour and the lineup is so long that it goes all the way to the back of the store. Recently, I've noticed that many stores are less busy because they do not have a lot of deals to offer, and many people are purchasing things online instead.

However, many malls including Metrotown and Eaton Centre in Toronto were very busy because people love good deals and they like to see the product before they buy it; something you can't do with online shopping. Furthermore, when I looked on Amazon to see what sales they had on Boxing Day, I didn't see anything interesting.

The disadvantages of getting deals online are that you might have to wait for a few weeks for the items to be shipped, or the item that you want might be sold out in a few seconds. Compared to going to the store on Boxing Day where you can get the item immediately and they have a stock of their products so that by lining up early, you have an increased chance of getting your product at a reduced cost.

Fewer sales happen on Boxing Day because of Black Friday coming to Canada years ago, but it is still a popular day to shop. The disadvantages of online shopping led to more people to shop in stores on Boxing Day and because of this, Boxing Day will continue as a tradition for generations to come.



# We need more male support groups on college campuses

> Men face hardships too, and they should not be ignored

Jessica Berget  
Opinions Editor

Women's centres exist on almost every Canadian college and university campus, but men's centres are practically non-existent. While there have been talks of establishing men's support groups and centres at some institutions, most are met with immediate opposition and hostility. People justify their resistance by claiming that establishing a men's centre would be sexist, since there are already so many male-centred spaces, and that such a centre would further perpetuate notions of hegemonic masculinity. While I do agree there are a lot of male-centred spaces, I would argue that denying a men's centre simply because you think it is sexist further contributes to sexism, rather than equality.

Take Simon Fraser University for example; in 2012, the SFU student union planned to finance a Men's Centre on campus, maintaining that men are also entitled to a safe space on campus. Unsurprisingly, this decision did not sit well with students. Even the SFU Women's Centre opposed the idea, with their assertion that "the men's centre is everywhere else."

If you don't provide a safe space for men to challenge notions of masculinity, homophobia, sexism, racism, classism, and ability issues, where are they going to do it? I believe there should be a place for men to facilitate these kinds of discussions to educate and inform all people, and all genders about the society we live in, and there is no better place to start these discussions than on college and university campuses.

We don't think about it much, but men are negatively affected by sexism, in different ways than women.

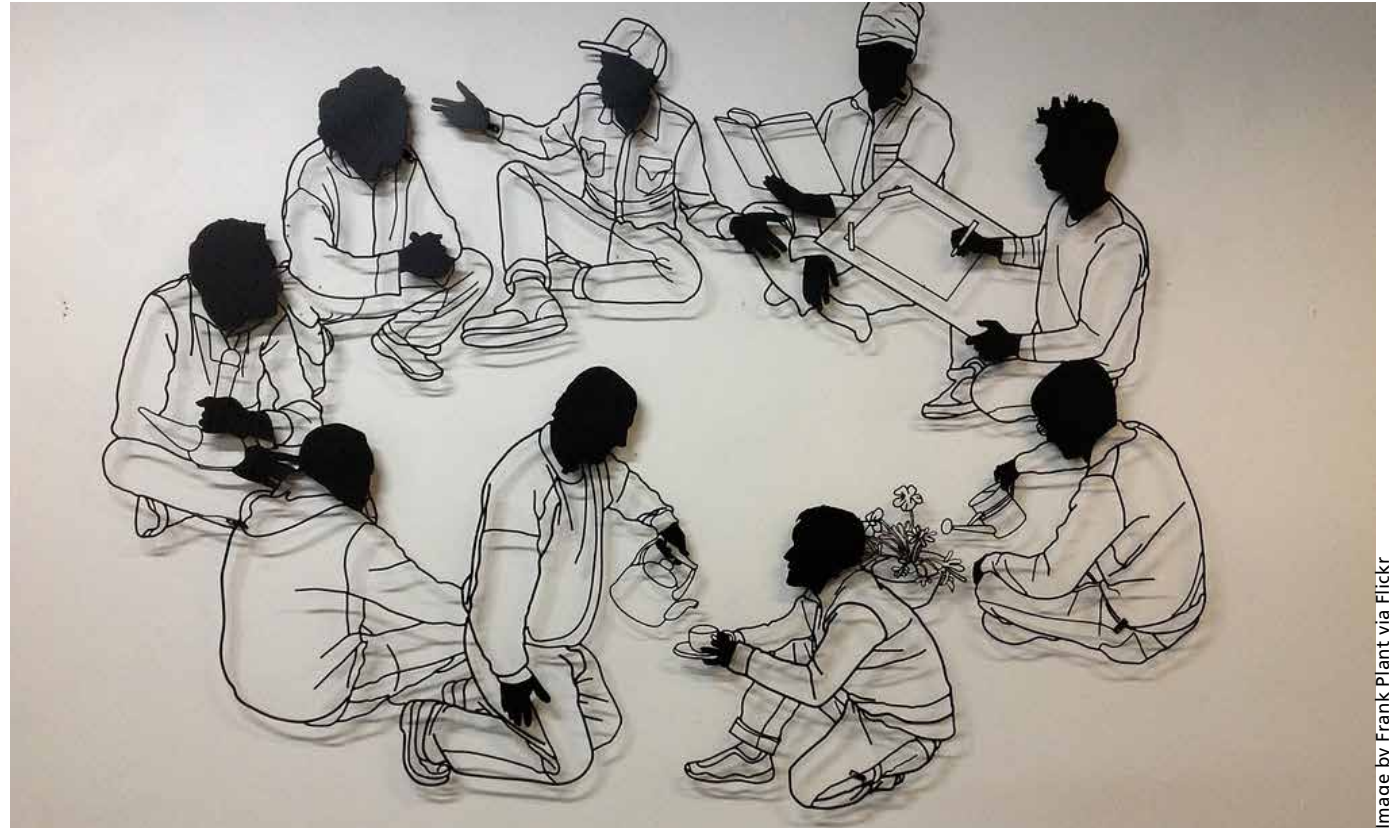


Image by Frank Plant via Flickr

They are shamed for acting in any way that is perceived as feminine, they are socialized to suppress their emotions, which ultimately leads to higher rates of suicide, and are often not taken seriously in cases of rape or abuse. Implementing more male support groups and centres would benefit both men and women because it would create the kind of atmosphere that allows for discussion and education about the issues that men face because of sexism and what can be done to rectify them.

Men of colour, LGBTQ+ men, and men with disabilities experience racism, homophobia, transphobia, or ableism in different ways than

women, but that should not mean they're not important. Men should be allowed to have a space to discuss these issues and to challenge them so that our society can become better equipped to combat these injustices and move further towards equality.

According to the DSU Women's Collective Facebook page, their mission is to "create a safe and inclusive space for all self-identified women to support, grow, and learn from each other," as well as to "focus on social justice, awareness, and community building through workshops, speakers and biweekly meetings." If a men's collective is established with the same

morals and guidelines, I don't see how it could negatively affect anyone in any way. The Women's Collective meetings I have attended have always benefitted and educated me to be a better person and ally, and I think men would also benefit from the same kind of discussions and support.

Men may hold much of the power in society, but that doesn't mean they don't face hardships of their own, or that their problems are not important. The sooner safe spaces for men to openly discuss their issues are established in post-secondary institutions, the sooner we can end this battle of the sexes and move together toward equality.

# YouTube is killing content creation

> Innovation is stifled under poor management and an unbreakable monopoly

Greg Waldock  
Staff Writer

It's no secret that YouTube is terrible. Their comment section has been the cesspit of the internet for more than a decade, every redesign brings more bugs, and ads have become increasingly invasive. Despite all this, it has managed to be a cultural powerhouse. Now it's impossible to say it even has that. In fact, I'd happily argue that YouTube is more than simply unwelcoming for its own new content creators—it's actively stifling innovation across the internet, and it's only going to get worse in the coming years.

YouTube, and Google at large, is a case study in why monopolies are terrible. The complete lack of competition (despite brave efforts from Vimeo and Vine, God rest their souls) means that they have absolutely no reason to improve anything for the benefit of the users or content creators, and can focus entirely on pleasing

advertising companies and Google suits. Because the audience is established and their video player—which is somehow the best video player on the internet despite everything else on the website—works so well, the public is simply not motivated to start the kind of mass migration that has killed so many websites throughout the history of the internet.

In most cases, a better site would come along and snatch away the audience, and Google would be forced to compete and improve—or risk losing money. The invisible hand of the market and all that nonsense. Here's where it falls apart:



Image via YouTube

YouTube has been colossally unprofitable for years. Like Twitter, it loses money like there's a hole in it. Google doesn't use it to generate advertising money; Google uses it to generate advertising data. YouTube won't—maybe even

can't—collapse any time soon, no matter how terrible and bankrupt it gets, because Google has control over advertising and can simply choose not to support any smaller site that could be a competitor.

This means that not only will YouTube never significantly improve, but that other, better video websites will never find a large audience. Those websites are left to try to fill a niche that YouTube misses.

Vine and VidMe were direct YouTube competitors, were responsible for a ton of creative content, and collapsed within a few years because Google has both the advertisers and the audience. Vimeo must restrict itself solely to artistic non-profit videos, and has been running basically as a charity for years. The monopoly YouTube has on video entertainment has created a situation where they can't lose, no matter how badly their site runs or how poorly they treat creators.

Over the coming years, we're going to see a lot more stories like the Logan Paul incident, or controversies where advertisers refuse to monetize pro-LGBTQ+ videos. Content on YouTube will become exactly like what cable television turned into: Sterile, protecting the status quo, and a safe place for terrible people to make a profit on being terrible. I'm not sure what a solution could possibly be, but it's a sad path for what should be an outlet for bold, collective self-expression.



- ✓ Student takes three writing-heavy courses in one semester
  - ✓ Inspired by Oprah, Justin Trudeau runs for president
  - ✓ Comics! Comics! Comics!
- And more!

## ‘The Sims 4’ sales skyrocket in Vancouver due to housing market prospects

› When housing gets you down IRL, live in someone else’s

Katie Czenczek  
Staff Writer

No one could have predicted the vast turnaround in profit that The Sims franchise experienced in the past months. A series that everyone thought was dead has managed to rise from the ashes of the forgotten game universe.

Further research shows that there is a specific area in the world, along with a new demographic, that has single-handedly saved The Sims 4 from extinction. Vancouver, British Columbia—which prides itself on being the most expensive place to live in Canada—is where all the profits for the games are coming from. Average Vancouverites all over the city have taken to the game despite having no previous experience in playing Sims before.

Denise Mann, a new player, explains why she spends all of her paycheck on The Sims.

“It’s the only place in Vancouver where I can afford to own a home. I don’t even buy mansions in the game, just a simple, detached house where my bedroom is not also my



Image via SimsCommunity.info

living room, my kitchen, my study area, and my washroom. I’m literally just making my dream home.”

Another Vancouverite-turned-Simmer named Joshua Choo explains why he too has taken to the game.

“I’m a student who currently lives in my parents’ house. Now this wouldn’t be too bad if I wasn’t 30 and just couldn’t afford to move out. In The Sims 4, I own a house and my parents are actually proud of me while I go to school. Plus, I’ve got killer abs and a best-selling novel.”

Casey Bautista, local student, plays

The Sims 4 at her local public library because she can’t afford a computer.

“I work three jobs just to pay rent, so I can’t even afford to buy myself a computer. I even pirate the games because they keep coming up with expansion packs. I can’t afford to buy those and pay my water bills. I’ve gotta play, it’s the only real escape I get from life.”

Todd Baker, active Simmer in the community who is fluent in Simlish (the language spoken in The Sims), describes the increase in sales as “shocking” and “completely surprising.”

## Canada officially names sarcasm as its third official language

› ‘Yeah, we’re reeeeeeeally excited,’ says trilingual advocate

Jacey Gibb  
Distribution Manager

In what may totally be the most important moment since Canada’s proclamation in 1867, the federal government announced on January 1 that Canada is now officially a trilingual country.

“We are both proud and humbled to have Sarcasm alongside English and French as Canada’s official languages,” said Justin Trudeau, in a press conference on January 2. “Canada is a country rich in diversity, and we know this decision will only help to better represent our multicultural nation.”

Trudeau then made the announcement in French, and then in Sarcasm, closing with, “I’m soooooo thrilled to be speaking about this today. There’s nothing else in the whole wide world I’d rather be doing than standing here, before you all, using taxpayers’ money wisely and efficiently.”

Under Canada’s Official Languages Act, Canadians now have the right to receive federal services in English,



Photo by Analyn Cuarto

French, or Sarcasm, as well as the right to be heard in federal courts in the official language of their choosing.

Official government documents, including laws, proceedings, and regulations, will also now be available in Sarcasm. Several new positions have also been created on the federal level, including multiple translators in Parliament for any visiting diplomats who may require translation from Sarcasm to French or English.

The announcement is a huge victory for teenagers, comedians, and assholes with low self-esteem who use sarcasm as a way to mask their deep-rooted insecurities.

Tyler Reynolds, a 17-year-old and self-described “sarcasm advocate,” told the Other Press that he was feeling “just peachy” about the federal government’s decision.

“You know, people talk about how they remember exactly where they

were or what they were doing during important moments throughout history, during the moon landing, or when the Berlin Wall came down,” says Reynolds. “This is that moment for me. This is my moon landing moment. No, for real though. Swear to God.”

But not everyone is as peachy as Reynolds over Canada’s decision to become a trilingual nation. The federal government has over 250,000 employees, for many of whom mandatory language training will now be priority.

“Equipping federal employees with the skills they need to communicate in Sarcasm will take time, but we’ve already begun the process,” says Debra Woolie, the newly-appointed Commissioner of Sarcasm, after clarifying that the title was 100 per cent sincere.

However, Woolie then delivered the same talking points, in the exact same fashion, further blurring the lines of whether not this whole decision was a long-winded sarcastic joke, or if it’s now an actual reality for the country.



# Student takes three writing-heavy courses in one semester

> Dies of hand cramps in second week

Duncan Fingarson  
Senior Columnist

Douglas student Harold Author has died this week from severe hand cramps. Author reportedly began feeling severe pain in his dominant hand soon after opting to take three writing-heavy classes in one semester. Two weeks in, he was heard complaining to his fellow students about a sharp pain. He was later found slumped over his desk, pen still clutched in one hand, having apparently died from trying to write too much too fast.

"He was the sort of person who always wanted to take notes by hand," said friend of the deceased, Shirley Jokin. "Even if the instructor provided handouts, he'd get out his binder and write everything down himself. It got worse when he started taking English classes. He... he refused to use a computer..." Ms. Jokin said nothing

else for some time, and instead stared off into space muttering about poor, foolish Harold.

While it's a widely-held fact that writing your own notes improves retention and aids learning, there

but Harold was known to hand-write every assignment. Very neatly, but still, come on man.

"Harold liked the tactile feel of pen, or pencil, on paper," Ms. Jokin said when she was finally able to speak once more.

"I was trying to convince him to get a laptop. He eventually conceded to getting a typewriter, to see how that would go, but those are just impossible to find. They're really heavy, too. Have you ever tried to carry a typewriter? It's worse than textbooks, and we all know how heavy those are."

Harold's last will and testament stated that if he died while still in college, he wanted his textbooks sold back to the bookstore to help fund his funeral. Unfortunately, though he originally paid \$8,000 for the stack of textbooks found in his room, the most the bookstore was willing to offer on buyback was a crumpled fiver and a pink gumball. The family has elected to build a casket out of the textbooks instead.

Author's funeral will take place next Thursday at 3 p.m.

is such a thing as going too far. Most instructors prefer papers to be typed,



# Inspired by Oprah, Justin Trudeau runs for president



> The rise of celebrity politicians gives room for politician celebrities

Greg Waldock  
Staff Writer

With Oprah's popularity skyrocketing after the Golden Globes earlier this year, all eyes are turning on her for the announcement of a presidential bid. Now that former reality TV star and lifelike marionette Donald Trump has been elected, and the Democrats are considering Oprah as their own anti-vaccine and radically wealthy response, the floodgates are open to any popular personality of the day—and today, that personality is Justin Trudeau. He announced his bid to run for American office early this Wednesday in a press conference at the American-Ontario border, which he promises to remove at American expense.

He arrived at the conference on snowboard, which he kicked off and flung into a crowd of screaming teenagers before brushing his perfect locks aside and stepping up to the podium.

"I'm famous for being a gorgeous man first, a high school teacher second, and a high school teacher third," he said, with a knowing wink at each camera consecutively. "But, I'm more than just a pretty face: I'm also ridiculously charismatic, and I support women's rights. I think that says enough about why I should rule almost all of North America."

Though the Liberal Party has always polled low in the States, many American news agencies are already willing to give him a shot. CNN ran

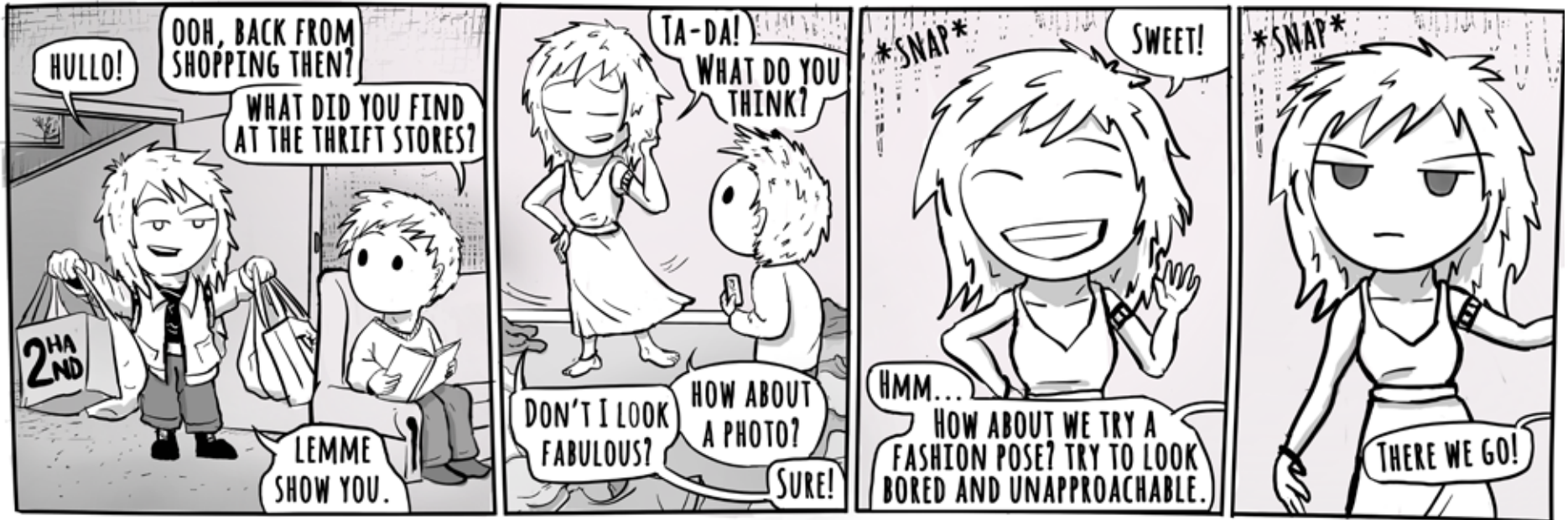
a segment the following day describing Trudeau's many accomplishments, such as being a snowboarding instructor and earning most of a master's degree in Environmental Science. MSNBC detailed the astounding lack of Canadians in American political office, and Sean Hannity with FOX News spent three hours describing Canada as a war-torn hellscape beset by roving gangs of Quebecois raiding the eastern reaches.

Justin Trudeau has not announced his policies, agendas, or cabinet lineups, but he has sworn to go back and edit all of Trump's presidential tweets for grammar and punctuation. His American campaign is expected to start up in 2019 and will be simultaneous with the next Canadian federal election, and he has decided to balance the two by just flying along the 49th parallel and visiting those odd border towns where kids need two passports just to visit school in the morning. Other presidential hopefuls have already demanded to see his birth certificate. Unfortunately, since it's in French, none of them can verify it save for Ted Cruz, who has been keeping his own Canadian identity a closely-guarded secret.

At the American-Ontario border address, Justin closed off his statements with inspiring words of self-confidence: "I have a famous last name, I'm astoundingly wealthy, and I would break several laws just by being elected. It's been a long time since America had a president so qualified."



# A WHOLE PAGE OF COMICS

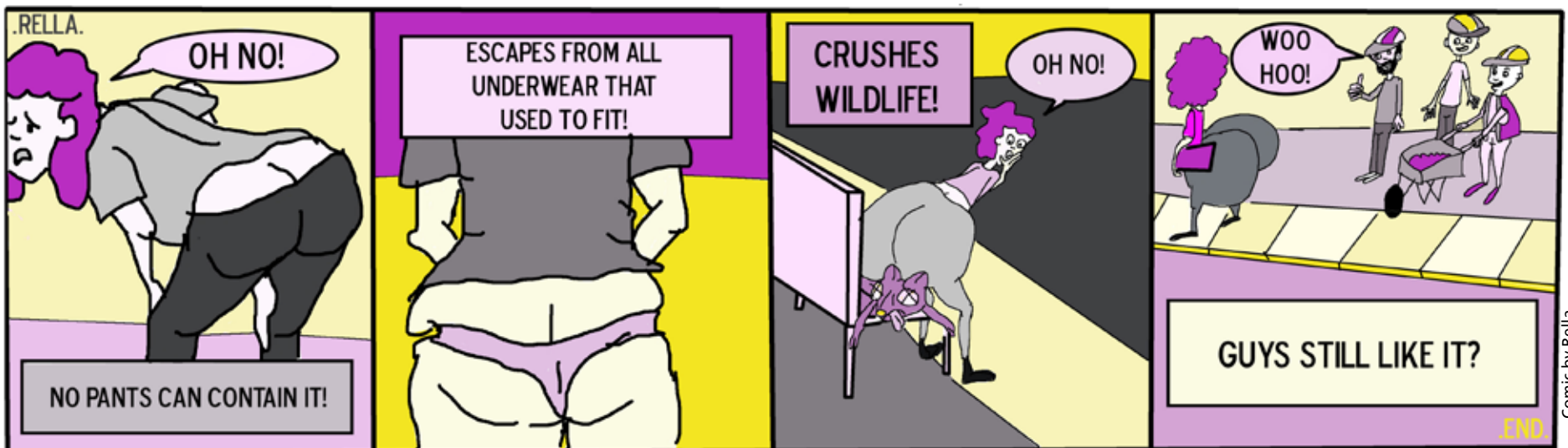


Comic by Nuclear Jackal



cartoon by Ed Appleby

## THE CASE OF THE EVER-EXPANDING ASS



Comic by Relia



**DOUGLAS STUDENTS' UNION**

# **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

<b>THURS JAN 25 2:30PM</b>	<b>ABORIGINAL GATHERING PLACE N4650- NWC</b>
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